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Teen boy sought in assault of 9-yr-old girl

SUSPECT A nine-year-old girl was sexually assaulted after a teenager convinced her to follow him to a park near the Arbutus Square Mall, Vancouver police said yesterday.

Officers are looking for a suspect in his early teens after the girl said she was approached while sitting on a bench near the entrance to the mall at Arbutus Street and West 32nd Avenue on Monday around 6 p.m.

The young man took her to a nearby park where he allegedly sexually assaulted and threatened her.

The suspect is described as being of average build, five-foot-one to five-foot-five, with short blond hair. He carried a black backpack with a Nike swoosh.

METRO VANCOUVER

Looking great **Banners on high**

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

City of Vancouver electrician Jason Raposo hangs 2010 Winter Olympic Games banners on a light standard yesterday. Story, page 2.

Goats for Gold

Brothers launch charity for Games similar to Canucks campaign

KRISTEN THOMPSON
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A pair of Langley brothers want Canadians to Goat For Gold during the upcoming Winter Olympics.

Joel and Danny Nagtegaal have launched an innovative campaign that combines patriotism and philanthropy, encouraging Canadians to buy a goat for a needy African family for each Gold Medal we win in the Games.

The charity is a spinoff of Goat Canucks Goat, which Joel started last spring to buy a goat for each playoff game the Canucks won.

"We were joking (that) if you combine two things that Canadians really love: Hockey and helping people out, (people) really like that," said Joel, 24, a student at the University of the Fraser Valley.

Their goal was 16 goats, but they wound up with 1,073.

"That was ridiculous," Joel said. "So if the whole country is on board, there'll be tons of goats … I don't even think it will matter how many medals we win. People just want to help out."

PHOTO COURTESY OF ILA DIEPERSLOOT

Pete and Ila Diepersloot, second and third from left, in Kenya last year with officials wearing Goat Canucks Goat T-shirts.

Worth their weight

- Goats donated through CRWRC cost $34.50 each. — For information, visit goatforgold.com.

Goat For Gold has partnered with The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC), a Canadian-based relief fund that facilitates the donation of livestock and goods to needy nations.

Goats are inexpensive to keep and are a source of much-needed milk and meat.

"Contrary to common belief, (they) are good for more than eating anything in sight and ramming small children at the local petting zoo," said Danny Nagtegaal.

He said the project has turned into "an amazing demonstration of the generosity of people" and confirmed the notion that one person and one idea can indeed make a difference.

"After the success of Goat Canucks Goat, it is exciting to think how many goats could be raised with the entire country on board."

UFC set for Vancouver in June: Source

MIXED MARTIAL ARTS The UFC is coming to Vancouver June 12, according to a top mixed martial arts news website.

MMAjunkie.com is reporting that a "well-placed UFC source" confirmed Vancouver as the host of UFC 115 at GM Place.

A 6-3 vote by Vancouver city councillors on Dec. 17 paved the way for the event. At that time, councillors agreed to sanction mixed martial arts contests on a two-year pilot basis.

After the vote, UFC president Dana White tweeted, "Another one down!" in reference to the growing acceptance of the sport in jurisdictions across North America.

In Canada, the UFC has hosted events in Montreal only. The third card in that city is UFC 113, which is planned for the Bell Centre May 1.

The main event in Montreal is expected to be a rematch between UFC lightweight champion Lyoto (The Dragon) Machida and Mauricio (Shogun) Rua.

A card at GM Place is expected to generate up to $4.7 million in spinoff economic benefits.

There's no word yet on what matchups can be expected in Vancouver.

METRO VANCOUVER

LARS BARON/GETTY IMAGES

Rick Story takes on John Hathaway at UFC 99.

News on the Move
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Vancouver Games
Countdown to 2010
Follow Metro as we bring you daily coverage leading up to the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver.
• Today — Omischl, fellow aerialists seek atonement, page 11

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Local

Alberta rents train for promotion

The Government of Alberta has rented the Rocky Mountaineer, left, for the duration of the 2010 Olympics. The train will be used to promote that province to visiting business people during the Games.

METRO VANCOUVER

METRO INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
2009 Festival of Media Awards

Mountie to name son after boy who escaped cougar

RCMP A British Columbia Mountie says he's naming his unborn son after the boy who escaped a cougar attack.

Eleven-year-old Austin Forman escaped the cougar in the backyard of his Boston Bar home when his dog, Angel, intercepted the big cat before it pounced, giving him time to run and call for help.

Const. Chad Gravelle answered that terrified call on Jan. 3 and arrived just in time to shoot the cougar, saving the life of Angel, who was being savaged by the animal.

Gravelle says the incident has forged a lasting bond with the Forman family and their pet, so he and his wife have decided to name their unborn son in honour of Austin.

Gravelle has also received a Detachment Commander's Commendation for his quick response and bulls-eye shooting that dispatched the cougar but did not harm Angel, although the two animals were tangled together.

Angel is expected to make a full recovery.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Security **Eyes on the Games**

DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

A security camera sits fixed to a temporary fencing barrier outside GM Place yesterday ahead of the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics. Security barriers and cameras have begun to go up in downtown Vancouver in preparation for the Games.

Parents renew plea for info on son's murder

CRIME The family of a man who was found stabbed to death in New Westminster four years ago today has renewed its appeal for information leading to the arrest of his killer.

Bobby Atwal, 22, was found dead on the riverbank under the Queensborough Bridge by work crews.

Yesterday, his parents reminded the public about a $25,000 reward they've put up for information leading to the arrest, charge and conviction of his murderer.

"Investigators strongly believe there are people in the community that have information that can resolve this investigation," said RCMP Cpl. Dale Carr.

"Very often, with the passing of time, people want to unburden themselves of this type of information. Now is the time to do it."

Anyone with information is asked to call the IHIT tip line at 1-877-551-IHIT (4448) or Crimestoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS. KRISTEN THOMPSON/METRO VANCOUVER

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News in brief

BODY After poor weather hampered Tuesday's search, rescuers have recovered the body of an Alberta man killed by an avalanche on Monday while backcountry skiing in south-central British Columbia.

MURDER A 33-year-old Surrey man was charged yesterday with the second-degree murder of his wife. The 32-year-old woman was found dead inside a home in the 13,000 block of English Place on Tuesday.

CHARGED The head of a Victoria health-services clinic has been charged for inflating his credentials after his expert testimony prompted police to investigate a father for potential abuse. METRO NEWS SERVICES

First Olympic banners go up

6,200 signs to be hung along streets, around Games venues

VANCOUVER 2010 **Games**

JEFF HODSON
jeff.hodson@metronews.ca

Vancouver is beginning to look the part of Olympic host as the city yesterday installed the first of 6,200 Olympic banners that will flutter from lampposts during the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The banners, which feature 36 designs, including 24 Olympic and Paralympic sporting events, are done in the blue-and-green theme that VANOC created to represent the look of the Games.

"We want to create some excitement and make Vancouver look great for the Games," said Lesli Boldt, Vancouver's Olympic spokeswoman.

"It's happening. The Games are coming. People are getting excited."

The banners will be installed day and night by six two-person crews for the next three weeks.

They will be hung on major arterial routes — Granville, Cambie and Hastings streets. They will also hang throughout the Downtown and around Olympic venues like the Pacific Coliseum, the athletes' village and the Vancouver Olympic Centre at Hillcrest Park.

The 6,200 banners cost the city $650,000 and were funded through the Olympic Legacy Reserve Fund. Half that money went to create the banners, the other half to install them.

The city is looking at ways of reusing the banners after the Games, Boldt said.

A previous round of 2010 Olympic banners were reused through a project called Sew a Legacy.

The old banners were taken down and converted into sports bags that were filled with school supplies for inner-city elementary students.

metronews.ca
WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Watch Mariah Carey's loopy acceptance speech at the Palm Springs Film Fest awards at **metronews.ca/entertainment**

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These results are not official.

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Photo Eric Berger

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Langley trucker rolling into retirement after winning $6.7M
A Langley truck driver is saying goodbye to the open road and retiring to a life of golf and fishing after picking up his $6.7-million Lotto 6-49 winnings. Karl Hoolsema had one of two winning tickets in the roughly $13-million draw in December, but only just checked his ticket to learn he'd become a millionaire. METRO VANCOUVER

Test-driving new ways to travel for Games

JEFF HODSON
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Organizers of Vancouver's Olympics want Lower Mainland residents to leave their cars at home tomorrow and practise alternative ways of getting to and from work.

The TravelSmart 2010 Challenge runs for five Fridays as a way of incrementally reducing traffic in the city's Downtown core ahead of the Winter Olympics.

"We all need to do our part to make the transportation plan one of the great success stories and one of their great memories of these Games," VANOC CEO John Furlong said in a release yesterday.

During the Games, Downtown Vancouver will have a number of street closures for security reasons and for the pedestrian corridors that link the LiveCity sites.

In addition to the thousands of additional people in the city, street parking will be almost non-existent within the Downtown peninsula and along arterial routes like Hastings, Cambie and Broadway, which will be used to shuffle athletes and media between venues.

VANOC has said it needs to reduce traffic by 30 per cent by Feb. 12, the start of the Games. During the Olympics they will urge people to avoid travelling between 7 and 9 a.m. and 2 and 7 p.m.

Tomorrow's goal is a five per cent reduction in traffic. The City of Vancouver will monitor traffic and report the results the following week.

Go online

- The website travelsmart2010.com offers suggestions to reduce traffic congestion, including a transit trip planner and tips on ride-sharing.

City to honour female athletes in poster series

SPORT Vancouver's park board will decorate its community centres as well as libraries, schools and other public buildings this month with 12 different posters celebrating local women athletes.

Sport was chosen as a theme for the second year of the park board's Remarkable Women poster series in recognition of International Women's Day on March 8.

The women featured in the posters, whose ranks include Lori Fung, the first woman to win Olympic gold in rhythmic gymnastics, date from the 1920s to the present.

Others include the Vancouver Amazons, a women's hockey team from the 1920s, and Poonam Sandhu, a current member of Canada's national field hockey team.

METRO VANCOUVER

'Bike rescuer' charged with theft

SEARCH A North Vancouver man who ran a business purporting to rescue stolen bikes and return them to their rightful owners has been arrested and charged with possession of stolen property and theft.

Gordon Sinclaire Blackwell, 41, who operated bikerescue.org, was arrested yesterday at a garage he rents in Surrey.

"These charges stem from an investigation that started in the summer of 2009 after a pattern of bicycle thefts occurred," said RCMP Cpl. Marlene Morton.

In November, North Vancouver RCMP executed a search warrant at Blackwell's business in New Westminster, where 153 bicycles were recovered.

Police have now returned close to 40 bicycles to their original owners but more are unaccounted for. Anyone who has had a bike stolen since 2008 is asked to email nvstolenbikes@rcmp-grc.gc.ca, and to include the make, model and colour of the bicycle.

KRISTEN THOMPSON/ METRO VANCOUVER

More online

- Gordon Blackwell told Metro Vancouver in June that he was shutting down the business for personal reasons. For more on Blackwell, go to metronews.ca.

News in brief

CHEMICALS A large amount of a potentially dangerous chemical that was reported missing en route to North Vancouver from Alberta has been found, RCMP said yesterday. A clerical error led to the search for two one-tonne bags of ammonium nitrate, the chemical that was used in the Oklahoma City bombing.

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Breast cancer testing lawsuit seeking approval of settlement
Members of a class-action lawsuit settlement in Newfoundland and Labrador's botched breast cancer testing scandal will seek to have the deal approved in court next month. In October, the province's largest health board and the law firm spearheading the lawsuit announced they had reached a $17.5-million settlement. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada

Man sought for alleged Ponzi scheme

Weizhen Tang, left, a Toronto fund manager who had claimed to be a Chinese Warren Buffett, is being sought by police on a Canada-wide arrest warrant on charges he ran a $40-million Ponzi scheme. Toronto police issued the warrant yesterday after Tang failed to surrender as promised on Dec. 29, Det. Gail Regan of the Toronto fraud squad said. He was charged in June with fraud and 11 other criminal charges in Ontario. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Plight of Afghan women grim

Suicide seen as way to escape violence, report says

More Afghan women are choosing suicide to escape the violence and brutality of their daily lives, says a new human-rights report prepared by Canada's Foreign Affairs Department.

The 2008 annual assessment paints a grim picture of a country where violence against women and girls is common, despite rising public awareness among Afghans and international condemnation.

"Self-immolation is being used by increasing numbers of Afghan women to escape their dire circumstances and women constitute the majority of Afghan suicides," said the report, completed in November 2009.

The document was obtained by The Canadian Press under the Access to Information Act.

87% A British study, cited in the Foreign Affairs report, said 87 per cent of Afghan women complained that they were the victims of violence, half of it sexual.

The director of a burn unit at a hospital in the relatively peaceful province of Herat reported that in 2008 more than 80 women tried to kill themselves by setting themselves on fire, many of them in their early 20s.

Many of those women died, the report said.

The frank evaluation of the plight of women was written against the backdrop of international debate last year over the Afghanistan government's so-called rape law.

The legislation, aimed at courting votes in the minority Shiite community, legalized rape within a marriage. It prompted outrage in Canada and many other countries.

The move was an attempt to codify social and religious practises, but the international condemnation forced the government to review the law. It was eventually enacted with some amendments, although the basic tenets remained unchanged.

"Rape is widely believed to be a frequent occurrence, though its true extent is concealed by under-reporting owing to the social stigma attached to it," says the 31-page partly-censored document.

The Afghan practice of "honour killings" has been cited as a major problem by both the Canadian Foreign Affairs Department and the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights.

The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission said it has "recorded 76 cases of honour killings in 2008, but the actual number is believed by local embassies and non-governmental organizations to be much higher."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Montreal police expect reprisals in simmering gang dispute, but say all-out war is unlikely. Scan this code for the full story.

Halifax **Two DUIs in one day?**

RYAN TAPLIN/METRO HALIFAX

Diedra Fougere is escorted from a courtroom at Halifax provincial court yesterday. Fougere was arrested twice on Tuesday and charged with impaired driving on both occasions — once in the morning and again in the evening. Fougere has two previous impaired driving convictions, one in 1990, the other in 2001.

Feeling constrained?

Feds look at biofuels impact

"Experiences ... now suggest that existing biofuels production facilities are responsible for the generation of a range of new air- and water-related problems."
Government study

GREEN The Harper government is taking a harder look at an industry that has been a political and policy darling amid soaring fuel prices and fretting about greenhouse gases.

A study has been ordered into the environmental and health effects of producing ethanol and biodiesel after other countries found facilities that make renewable fuels could be behind problems with air, water and human health.

"Based on global production levels from the past three years alone, there is now evidence of implications to the environment from biofuels-based ethanol production facilities," says a government document released yesterday. "Biofuels (ethanol and biodiesel) are still viewed as 'green' energy sources by some, however criticism of biofuels has also grown remarkably throughout recent years. ...

"Experiences in the U.S. and Brazil now suggest that existing biofuels production facilities are responsible for the generation of a range of new air- and water-related problems as well as recent concerns over human health."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadian Arctic melting season growing faster than others: Study

SCIENCE American researchers suggest the melting season for Arctic sea ice is growing faster across much of the Canadian Arctic than anywhere else in the world.

A recently-published article outlines how they used satellite microwave data to measure when sea ice begins to melt in the spring and when it starts freezing in the fall. The researchers were able to look with 99 per cent accuracy as far back as 1979 and examine the entire circumpolar globe, the first time scientists have been able to do so.

They found that, on average, sea ice has started melting 2.5 days earlier every decade and begun to freeze 3.7 days later. That means the average melt season is just under 20 days longer than it was 30 years ago.

In Baffin Bay it is increasing about 20 per cent faster than the global average. And in the Beaufort Sea and Hudson Bay, the melt period is now a full month longer than it was in 1979. THE CANADIAN PRESS

More colorectal screenings needed

STUDY Despite a high level of awareness about the benefit of being routinely screened for colorectal cancer, less than half of Canadians in the targeted age group of 50-plus are getting tested, a national survey suggests. The survey, commissioned by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, polled 3,153 people aged 45 to 74 regarding their understanding and attitudes about getting checked for colorectal cancer, the second leading cause of death from cancer in both men and women.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

More than two dozen die in mine fire
A fire in a coal mine in central China killed at least 25 workers, state media reported yesterday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Yemen wary of U.S. troops intervention

Yemen's foreign minister said yesterday that his country opposes any direct intervention by U.S. or other foreign troops in the fight against al-Qaida.

Foreign Minister Abu Bakr al-Qirbi told The Associated Press in an interview that "there is a lot of sensitivity about foreign troops coming to Yemeni territory."

His comments came as Yemeni security forces launched a manhunt for the suspected leader of an al-Qaida cell believed to be behind a threatened attack that forced the closure this week of the U.S. and British embassies in the capital city of San'a.

Security forces swept into several areas where the militant, Mohammed Ahmed al-Hanaq, was believed to be hiding in the mountainous region of Arhab, northeast of the capital, but have not located him, security officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the press.

The U.S. says the Arhab cell was behind a plot to send al-Qaida fighters into San'a to carry out attacks, possibly against foreign embassies. The U.S. and British embassies closed down Sunday and Monday, and other Western missions limited or stopped their access to the public.

Security forces on Monday tried to capture al-Hanaq as he was moving through the Arhab region, prompting heavy clashes. Mohammed Ahmed and Nazeeh al-Hanaq both escaped, but two fighters with them were killed. The U.S. and British embassies reopened the following day, saying the clashes had largely resolved the threat.

There have been media reports that U.S. cruise missiles or warplanes were involved in strikes carried out last month against several al-Qaida strongholds, which Yemen says killed at least 30 militants.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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SCANLIFE
A Pentagon report finds rising numbers of former Gitmo detainees are returning to the battlefield. Scan this code for the full story.

Peru **Bonus baby**

MARTIN MEJIA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A child representing baby Jesus lies covered in cash as the hand of a man representing one of the Three Kings reads coca leaves in an Andean Indian market on Epiphany in Lima yesterday. Epiphany, also known as Three Kings Day, is celebrated by Catholics to commemorate the journey of the Three Kings who paid homage to baby Jesus.

News in brief

KENYA A lone elephant charged out of the brush as an American family was hiking near Mount Kenya and trampled to death a mother and the one-year-old daughter she held in her arms, officials said yesterday. Four adults and the baby were walking with an unarmed guide when the elephant charged, said Kenya Wildlife Service official Michael Kipkeu.

U.S. President Barack Obama began his second year in office with the second lowest job approval rating and highest disapproval rating of any president at that point in their term in 50 years. But the ratings do not necessarily predict political failure, since other presidents with low polling numbers have gone on to win re-election. According to Gallup, Obama started out his presidency with a 68 per cent approval rating. But that has dropped to 50 per cent going into 2010. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Prostitute loses case against school

NETHERLANDS A Dutch court has rejected a claim by a woman who sued her former high school for allegedly failing to stop her from becoming a prostitute. Maria Mosterd claimed Thorbecke School should have done more to prevent pimps preying on her and should have told her mother about her repeated school absence.

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Suicide bomber kills six
A suicide bomber blew up an explosives-packed car at a police station in Russia's troubled North Caucasus yesterday, killing six officers and wounding at least 16 people. The bomber detonated the explosives after police stopped him. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Self-policing helping stem extremism: Study

A U.S. study released yesterday on homegrown terror reveals that most of the publicly known cases since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks involved young men who were U.S.-born or naturalized citizens.

The report, called "Anti-Terror Lessons of Muslim-Americans," and conducted by researchers from Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, aimed to learn why American Muslims seem less prone to extremism than Muslims in Europe and elsewhere.

It identified 139 American Muslims accused in the last eight years of planning or carrying out violent attacks motivated by extremism. Although Arabs formed the largest group of suspects, their numbers were only slightly higher than African-Americans, South Asians, Somalis and whites. About a third were converts to Islam. Researchers concluded that American Muslim self-policing has helped stem radicalization.

The study found all but one of the suspects were male, most were under 30 and most were U.S.-born, naturalized citizens or legal residents of the U.S.

The report urges civil authorities to increase support for American Muslims starting youth groups that reinforce the message that extremism is contrary to Islam.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

David Ikeda
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1 killed in dispute over aid delay

EGYPT Egyptian security forces and Palestinians clashed at the Gaza border yesterday over the delay of an international aid convoy, killing one Egyptian border guard and wounding 15 Palestinians.

It was the worst violence on the border since an Egyptian major was killed by Palestinian gunmen during Israel's offensive on the Gaza Strip in December 2008.

The incident further raises tension between Egypt and the Hamas rulers of the Gaza Strip who see Cairo's attempts to seal the border as a direct threat to their survival. Egypt has come under criticism from Arab groups for co-operating with Israel in its 28-month blockade of the territory.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mental state of father charged in death questioned

PHOENIX The lawyer for an Iraqi immigrant charged with killing his 20-year-old daughter, says his client doesn't understand court proceedings and may need a mental-health evaluation. Attorney Billy Little says he first met with 49-year-old Faleh Hassan Almaleki on Tuesday, and that the immigrant didn't understand the role of his lawyer, the judge or a grand jury. Little says that could be due to language and cultural barriers and a possible mental health issue. Almaleki was in court yesterday and said only his name and birthday when prompted by the judge.

Authorities say Almaleki ran down his daughter with his Jeep on Oct. 20 as she was walking across a parking lot in the Phoenix suburb of Peoria. Noor Faleh Almaleki died Nov. 2.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

ALASKA An ice sculpture of former U.S. vice-president Al Gore hooked up to the exhaust of a pickup truck, to appear as though he's spouting hot air, has been erected in Fairbanks, Alaska. The sculpture was commissioned by businessmen Craig Compeau and Rudy Gavora, who want Gore to discuss global warming in Fairbanks.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canada still wants names of tax evasion suspects

Canada still hopes to persuade UBS to hand over the names of Canadian clients suspected of tax evasion, Revenue Minister Jean-Pierre Blackburn said on Tuesday. METRO NEWS SERVICES

7

Business

EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Government debt a concern: Pollsters

But majority expects better economy in 2010, study says

Canadians are starting to put their confidence back in the economy but their concern over government debt has risen, according to a new survey from Pollara Strategic Research.

The study found that 54 per cent of Canadians surveyed in December expected the economy will improve in 2010. That's far more optimistic than at the same time last year, when Canada was in the midst of a major global recession.

Only 20 per cent of those surveyed in the previous poll for the Economic Club of Canada expected 2009 would bring better times.

The latest Pollara poll also found 17 per cent of respondents believe Canada is in a period of moderate growth, compared with only six per cent who felt that way in 2009.

Pollara chairman Michael Marzolini told the Economic Club of Canada yesterday that while many Canadians' fears about the economy have abated, "the public has now shifted to focus on the growing national debt."

Marzolini said that the number of Canadians expecting higher taxes has doubled since the survey last year.

The poll results were collected from 4,263 respondents on Pollara's online panel between Dec. 6-14. A sample of this size is considered to be accurate within 1.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

The Pollara poll is the latest evidence that the Canadian economy is on the mend. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Slower growth

- The real challenge facing Canadians is not that the country will slip back into recession, but getting used to slower growth, economists say. An aging population and reduced demand are among factors that will determine how quickly the economy expands.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

m.metronews.ca

SCANLIFE

Businesses increasingly look to so-called "cyber moms" as a lucrative and powerful customer base. Scan this code for the full story.

TSX sets trading, finance records

MARKETS The Toronto Stock Exchange set new trading and financing records last year, a period when the market gained just under 31 per cent in stock value.

Canada's dominant stock exchange owner, TMX Group, said yesterday that total financings raised $60 billion for companies, surpassing the previous record of $47.6 billion set in 2007.

Meanwhile, the total 2009 trading volume of 118.5 billion shares was higher than the previous record of 109.2 billion set in 2008.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

GM denies reduction report

AUTOMOTIVE General Motors denied reports yesterday that suggest the big automaker could reduce production targets at its Canadian plants when it adds new car models over the next few years. The Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association said GM plans to build the new Chevrolet Impala in both Oshawa, Ont., and Hamtramck, Mich., — a decision that could hurt GM's overall production levels in Canada. The company added that it will "fully comply" with a promise to the federal and Ontario governments that it will maintain 16 per cent of its total North American vehicle assembly capacity in Canada. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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INFORMATION FEATURE

Clear goals can help investors

Investing ultimately comes down to risk and return.

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

Taking the reins of your own investments can feel both exciting and daunting, but knowing yourself and your own financial goals can make the process a lot easier.

Jason Storsley, president and CEO of RBC Direct Investing, says the key to starting on any investment path is to understand first what it is you hope to get out of your investments.

"The first starting point for any investor is to understand what their goals are, and how much monthly saving they need to achieve those goals," Storsley said.

Ultimately, what investing comes down to is risk and return, and how much of the former you're willing to take on will usually determine how much of the latter you can reasonably expect to make.

"The first starting point for any investor is to understand what their goals are, and how much monthly saving they need to achieve those goals." Jason Storsley

"What it essentially comes down to is, what level of risk are you comfortable taking to achieve your goals? A lower return gives more safety, while a higher return carries more risk," Storsley said.

Investors should always plan out whether their financial goals are more short-term, such as saving a few thousand dollars to pay off a credit card debt or to put a down payment on a new car, or more long-term, such as collecting a down payment for a house or saving up for a child's education.

The clearer and more specific you are with yourself, the easier it will be to determine what level of risk and overall investment you should pursue.

Storsley suggests most people fall into one of six investor categories. Which category you fall into can make a big difference in the types of investment decisions that will fit your own investment goals:

- **Secure investors** prefer the least amount of risk possible, usually because they want to make sure their initial investments remain as secure as possible. These types of investors prefer to maintain the security of their money for a noticeably lower rate of return.
- **Income investors** are often secure investors who prefer to have their money provide a steady, regular cash flow stream that they can count on while maintaining a steady value on the initial investment. Income investors frequently branch out to income-producing investments such as government bonds and Guaranteed Investment Certificates (GICs).
- **Conservative investors** are willing to take a few more risks to secure a slightly higher rate of return, but they still shy away from particularly risky investments. Occasionally, conservative investors might dabble in a risky investment or two, but generally, they keep the vast majority of their holdings in relatively safe, steady investments.
- **Balanced investors** are more comfortable with taking risks and are willing to take a bigger stab at investments with higher risk-reward potential. Yet, they like to offset their riskier investments with a substantial portion of secure investments. Essentially, they keep a bedrock of lower-return investments in one half of their portfolio and more volatile holdings in the other half, ensuring a good chunk of their initial investment is protected while still being able to see potentially strong returns.
- **Growth investors** are comfortable with riskier investments, but they have the patience to approach their investment strategy from a long-term view. They don't need regular income from their investments and look to benefit from the stock market's long-term growth potential. Growth investors tend to invest in riskier options they believe will benefit in the long run and then hold those investments through downswings.
- **Aggressive investors** have a high risk tolerance and want to make their money grow as quickly as possible over a long-term period. They understand that the value of their investments could fluctuate greatly over time and are willing to risk significant portions of their initial investment to achieve a higher rate of return.

Once you've decided on your investor profile, RBC's online Asset Mix Calculator can help you build a portfolio already matched to your investment goals by compiling an asset mix that has been pre-screened by RBC experts.

"The Asset Mix Calculator will walk you through all the steps of the process to fit your individual investor style," Storsley said.

RBC Royal Bank branches can provide you with a comprehensive Investor Profile questionnaire and RBC advisers can help guide you through your answers to make sure you get an accurate picture of what kind of investor you are.

On the web

- For more on RBC Direct Investing, log on to rbcdirectinvesting.com.

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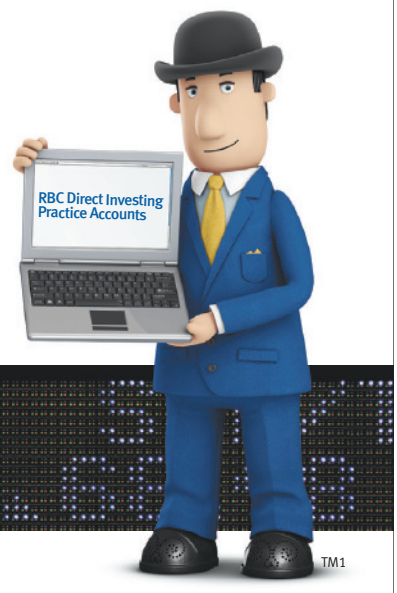

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Comment

Pitfalls of his and hers resolutions

Relating

So, it's been almost a week. How are those resolutions holding up?

I wish you luck. The delinquency rates are high, and no wonder. This is a wretched time of year to embark on major renovations to one's finances, waistline, health or character. It's my personal conviction that to get through these dark, cold months, you'll need every vice and crutch you have in your arsenal.

Bad habits might be easier dumped in June, but we persist in picking this arbitrary date to spontaneously improve.

I've made one small, timid resolution, indeed one perhaps so incremental as to be meaningless. My beloved has a handful of semi-ambitious ones and a better track record of making them happen.

I see no sign so far that either of our plans have us headed for couple trouble, which resolutions can bring about with unnerving ease.

First and foremost, resolution season has us focused on our faults, thus reminding our partners of a few minor glitches instead of the pretty damn OK overall package. Excessive dissatisfaction with oneself can be contagious.

"We are also not always at our easiest to live with while in the throes of self-improvement."

We are also not always at our easiest to live with while in the throes of self-improvement. If you're trying to kick booze or smokes, your special someone gets to enjoy your irritability at deprivation or self-loathing at backslide.

You can also find yourself roped into resolutions you never made. If your partner is on a diet, especially if you live together, good luck not ending up on it yourself. Misery loves company, and gets annoying if you keep snarfing back the pizza.

It probably helps to share your resolutions with each other, to get that gym buddy effect and reinforce your respective resolve, but, in the face of entirely understandable failure, a little understanding goes a long way.

And please, please, refrain from making resolutions for each other, or even suggesting them, except in extreme circumstances. Let's say you can suggest one every five years if you're willing to accept suggestions in turn, but I'd still suggest skipping it entirely.

Never far enough away, after all, is the ultimate hazard of this time of year: Getting resolved right out the door as your significant other starts taking stock and deciding what stays and what goes in his or her life, and you end up on the latter list.

It's not for nothing that family lawyers mark D-Day (Jan. 8 or thereabouts), the day that they begin the greatest annual volume of divorce proceedings. I suspect a lot of these begin as New Year's resolutions. Be careful out there.

Steve Collins offers his best guesses on relationships for Metro every two weeks.

Views

Idiot box: Tuning out Berlusconi's TV culture

FourthWave

One of the joys of living in an immigrant household is the access to diasporic television. It connects you to your family's pop culture.

So I understand the preoccupation with the idea of femininity, something that seems to afflict Lorella Zanardo as well. Her documentary-manifesto, Il Corpo Delle Donne (Women's Bodies), was borne out of the frustration of watching Italian television turn women into *veline* — bikini-clad talk show sidekicks.

In clips from the doc, the models are mocked for their ditziness, paraded before male talk show hosts in thongs, or (in a painfully literal analogy) hung from hooks like meat. Despite the treatment, *veline* are celebrities, so it's no surprise some young Italian women strive to become one.

On the web

- Watch Women's Bodies online at metronews.ca/fourthwave

"Real women's bodies have been hidden away; instead we are presented with an obsessively vulgar image made of silicone lips, thighs, breasts: The truth is removed and replaced with a mask," Zanardo narrates, one she says robs women of their identities, opinions, and natural beauty. "Who are we? What do we want? Why aren't all Italian women in the streets protesting against the way they are represented?"

I asked my friend Nina, whose family watches Italian shows the way mine watches Hong Kong ones, whether it was as bad as the doc suggested. It is, she said.

The root of the problem? "It's Berlusconi," she said, referring to Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. Before he ruled Italy's politics, he conquered its culture with his Mediaset empire of television stations. *Veline* are rampant on his channels.

It's shocking there's been little backlash until now, but Berlusconi's popularity among women, his primary supporters, is waning. I was heartened to read this from Italian Prof. Chiara Volpato in a New York Times op-ed: "Today there are two Italys: One Italy has soaked up Mr. Berlusconi's ideology either out of self-interest or an inability to resist his enormous powers of persuasion; the other is fighting back" — which means sooner or later, they're going to rise up and pull the plug on Silvio's TV set.

Canice Leung is a former editor of Ryerson University feminist magazine McClung's, copy editor at Metro, ardent feminist and loudmouth.

MICHAEL DE ADDER

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WTA given assurance from UAE government that Israeli player will get visa

The United Arab Emirates assured the WTA in writing it will allow Israeli tennis player Shahar Peer to play at next month's Dubai tournament after barring her last year. Peer had been denied a visa apparently because of anti-Israel sentiments in the Gulf state following a three-week war between Israel and Islamic militants in Gaza. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

Arenas suspended by NBA

NBA commissioner David Stern indefinitely suspended Gilbert Arenas, left, without pay yesterday, saying the Washington Wizards guard is "not currently fit to take the court." Stern also warned Arenas's conduct will "ultimately result in a substantial suspension, and perhaps worse." Arenas is under investigation by federal and local authorities after admittedly bringing guns to the locker room. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

Sports in brief

HENRY Police won't charge the fiancée of late Cincinnati Bengals receiver Chris Henry in connection with his death last month. Charlotte-Mecklenburg police announced yesterday there was no evidence that Loleini Tonga drove recklessly or with excessive speed last month when Henry came out of the back of her pickup truck on a curvy, residential road and suffered fatal injuries.

DUI Former NHL defenceman Chris Chelios was arrested last month and charged with drunk driving and speeding in suburban Chicago. Westmont police say the 47-year-old Chelios, who now plays for the AHL's Chicago Wolves, was driving alone in his pickup truck when he was pulled over shortly after 4 a.m. on Dec. 28 for speeding and improper lane usage.

CFL The Saskatchewan Roughriders say they need more time to decide whether general manager Eric Tillman has a future with the team. There are questions about his future with the CFL club since he pleaded guilty earlier this week to sexually assaulting his children's teenage babysitter.

BASEBALL The St. Louis Cardinals will be paying Matt Holliday through 2029 under the $120 million US, seven-year contract that is likely to be finalized today. Holliday will get $17 million a season in salary, but $2 million a year will be deferred without interest, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press yesterday.

RIBEIRO The Dallas Stars said centre Mike Ribeiro will stay overnight at a New York hotel after sustaining a throat injury during a loss to the New York Rangers. Ribeiro was accidentally struck under his chin by the stick of New York's Christopher Higgins as the players crossed paths at centre ice in the second period of the Stars' 5-2 loss last night.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Dawson elected into Hall

Andre Dawson got up at 6 a.m. and went to the gym. Before going back home, he took a detour from his usual routine on the day Hall of Fame voting is announced.

"I went by a cemetery to visit my mom and also my grandmother," he said. "It's the first time I had done that. I just felt a little bit more optimistic about this year, and I just wanted to share a few things at that grave site. It meant a lot to me to get out there."

Dawson's faith was rewarded a few hours later yesterday, when he was elected to the Hall in his ninth try. He was the only player honoured, as Bert Blyleven fell five votes short and Roberto Alomar finished eight shy.

Dawson received 420 of 539 votes in results announced by the Baseball Writers' Association of America, 15 more than the 75 per cent necessary to gain election.

"If you're a Hall of Famer, eventually you're going to get in no matter how long it takes," Dawson said during a telephone conference call.

"As I sit here, the only thing I can think of is that it was well worth the wait."

THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE PHOTO

Andre Dawson played for the Montreal Expos from 1976 to 1986.

Dawson hit 438 homers with 1,591 RBIs in a career that spanned from 1976-96. He was voted NL Rookie of the Year in 1977 with Montreal and NL Most Valuable Player in 1987 with the Chicago Cubs.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Edgar Martinez

• In his first appearance on the Hall of Fame ballot, Edgar Martinez got nearly half the support he'll need to enter Cooperstown. Martinez, the former Seattle Mariners slugger, received 195 votes (36.2 per cent) in results released yesterday. It was far short of the 75 per cent needed to gain election from members of the Baseball Writers' Association of America, but a solid base to start from.

Lions lose Lumbala to Miami Dolphins

CFL Another year, another B.C. Lions player signing with the NFL's Miami Dolphins.

The NFL club has signed Lions fullback Rolly Lumbala.

The six-foot-two, 238-pound Lumbala was selected ninth overall by B.C. in the 2008 Canadian college draft and spent the last two seasons with the CFL team.

Lumbala first signed with Miami two years ago following his college career at the University of Idaho and joined the Lions after being released by the NFL club.

Last year, the Lions lost standout defensive end Cameron Wake to the Dolphins and also saw running back Stefan Logan sign with the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Meanwhile, the Indianapolis Colts signed Winnipeg Blue Bombers receiver Dudley Guice.

Guice played three games in 2009 with the Bombers, hauling in six receptions for 76 yards.

In another move, the Toronto Argonauts signed linebacker Jason Pottinger to a contract extension that will keep him with the CFL club through the 2011 season.

Toronto acquired Pottinger in a trade with the B.C. Lions last March and this season the native of Whitby, Ont., posted 12 special-teams tackles. He also had six tackles, a sack and forced a fumble.

The Hamilton Tiger-Cats also signed defensive tackle Darrell Adams and import linebacker Otis Floyd to contract extensions.

"Darrell and Otis are key players in the middle of our defence and provide valuable experience at their positions," GM Bob O'Billovich said in a statement.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Minnesota 4 Calgary 1
Philadelphia 6 Toronto 2
Buffalo 5 Tampa Bay 3
N.Y. Islanders 3 Colorado 2
N.Y. Rangers 5 Dallas 2
San Jose 2 St. Louis 1 (OT)

TODAY'S GAMES

Chicago at Boston
Ottawa at Washington
N.Y. Rangers at Atlanta
Florida at Montreal
Philadelphia at Pittsburgh
Carolina at Nashville
Columbus at Edmonton
Phoenix at VANCOUVER
St. Louis at Anaheim
Detroit at Los Angeles

U.S. COLLEGE FOOTBALL

TODAY'S GAME
BCS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP AT PASADENA, CALIF.
Alabama (13-0) vs. Texas (13-0), 5 p.m.

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Toronto 108 Orlando 103
Atlanta 119 New Jersey 89
Boston 112 Miami 106 (OT)
Cleveland 121 Washington 98
Golden State 107 Minnesota 101
New Orleans 97 Oklahoma City 92
Phoenix 118 Houston 110
San Antonio 112 Detroit 92
Utah 117 Memphis 94
L.A. Clippers 102 L.A. Lakers 91

Anderson takes gold
Alpine snowboarder Jasey-Jay Anderson won gold yesterday in a World Cup parallel giant slalom race on a tricky Austrian course. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Vancouver Games

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

High expectations

Men's aerialists seek to better Turin performances

Their reactions ranged from confusion to optimism to bitter disappointment.

Four years after a disastrous showing at the 2006 Olympic Games, Canada's top men's aerialists are in a far better frame of mind this time around, confident they can put the memories of Turin behind them.

Steve Omischl is the lone Canadian to have already secured his spot for the Vancouver Games while Ryan Blais, Warren Shouldice and Kyle Nissen are also hoping to make the Olympic team and help Canada deliver on the high expectations next month at Cypress Mountain.

They opened their World Cup season in December at Changchun, China, where Omischl was the top Canadian, earning a fourth- and a fifth-place finish. The preparation continues this weekend with a World Cup in Calgary.

The Canadian men are no strangers to pre-Olympic hype. Omischl, a native of North Bay, Ont., who now lives in Kelowna, B.C., was the defending World Cup champion four years ago. But he was battling a plantar fasciitis injury that cost him several months of competition leading up to the Games. Ever the daredevil, Omischl attempt a difficult jump in the qualifying round but botched the landing and ended up a disappointing 20th.

"I definitely bit off more than I could chew, and after coming off an injury, that was probably ill-advised," Omischl said during a recent interview.

Steve Omischl

"The whole coaching staff would probably agree with that, but that's what happens after coming off an injury and not training very much that year and then trying to do something harder than you're capable of. That's probably not the best scenario."

"I definitely bit off more than I could chew."
Steve Omischl

For Omischl and former national team veteran Jeff Bean, who also failed to qualify for the final, the result was devastating. Omischl was a wreck afterward, suggesting the qualifying miss was one of the worst moments of his life.

When asked if he has forgotten about the Turin fiasco, Omischl paused.

"Well, it's ... nothing is ever behind you," said Omischl, who finished 11th at his first Olympics in Salt Lake City. "You learn from what experiences happen throughout your career."

One of the lessons Omischl learned in Italy? Don't overcompensate.

"If anything, I'm just going to carry that knowledge that if I do have a minor setback or an injury going into Vancouver, that I don't have to, to use a cheesy hockey analogy, 'grip the stick' so tight," he said. "I don't have to try that hard if I have a setback, I just kind of need to relax and trust in my abilities."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Learn more about Steve Omischl in an interactive profile at: **metronews.ca/sports**

Eagle lands back in Canada for torch relay

It's as close to Olympic glory as Eddie (the Eagle) Edwards is going to get these days.

The British man who became a folk hero during the 1988 Calgary Olympics for his geek-chic and infectious smile — despite placing dead last in ski jumping — has returned to Canada as an official torchbearer in Winnipeg.

The favourite Olympic underdog was to run 300 metres with the flame this morning to usher it out of the Manitoba capital.

Although his own dreams of glory were dashed over two decades ago, Edwards is throwing himself into his torchbearing duties with as much gusto as he did on the ski jump as Britain's one-man team.

"It's great. I'm loving it," Edwards said yesterday after a curling lesson at a Winnipeg rink.

"I didn't realize I was going to become Eddie the Eagle and that I was going to become as big as I got at Calgary." Eddie Edwards

"I'm honoured to be asked to take part in the Olympic torch relay and be a part of the Canadian Olympic ideals and dreams and aspirations."

The 45-year-old had been ski jumping for just two years when he decided he wanted to participate at the 1988 Olympics. Back then, there were fewer restrictions on who could compete and Edwards put his name forward.

With huge, often fogged-up Coke-bottle glasses, a prominent underbite and permanent smile, Edwards threw himself into the competition — and placed a very distant last.

That mattered little to the thousands who mobbed him throughout the Games and chanted his name as he tentatively launched himself off Calgary's 120-metre ski jump.

"I didn't realize I was going to become Eddie the Eagle and that I was going to become as big as I got at Calgary," said Edwards.

His poor performance and high profile at the Olympics prompted officials to change the rules. They tightened requirements for Olympic hopefuls and restricted spots to top athletes.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Olympic staff unhappy about losing BlackBerrys

A power struggle at Vancouver's Olympic headquarters has left staff divided into two camps: Those who get to keep their BlackBerrys and those who don't.

Since Waterloo-based Research In Motion, maker of the beloved communication device, is not a sponsor, Olympic staffers are being forced to turn in their BlackBerrys for an Omnia or a Vice, both made by South Korea's Samsung, official provider of wireless communications equipment for the 2010 Olympics.

The move has been met with a thumbs down by some staffers at the organizing committee because they're frustrated with the touch-screen devices and say key functions like sending and reading email are nearly impossible.

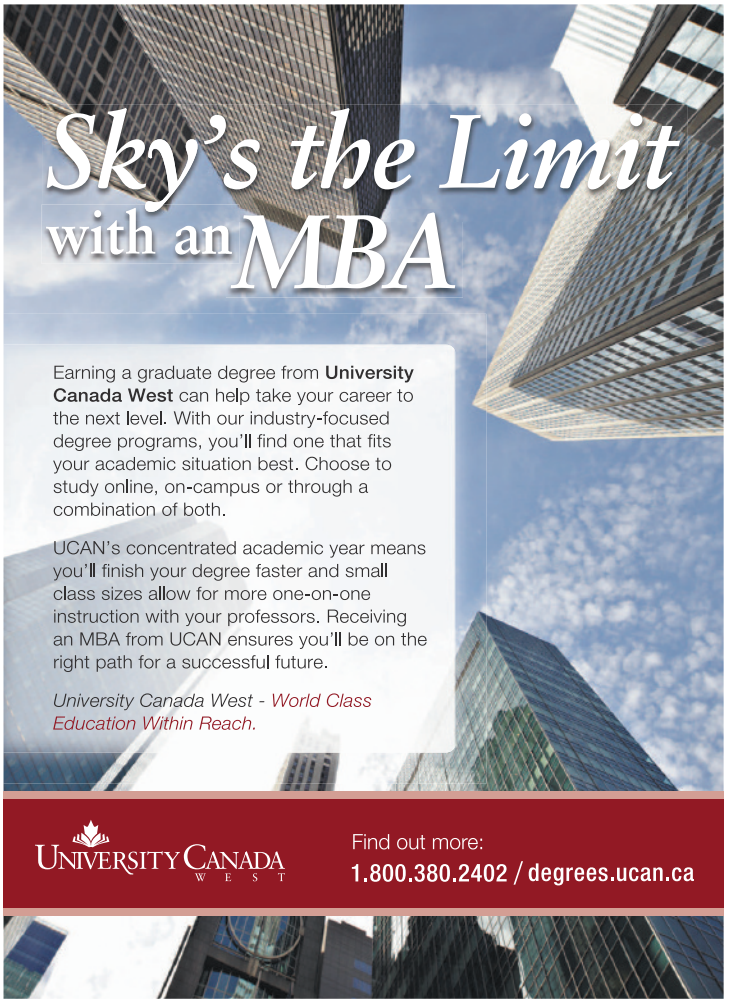
Officially, VANOC downplays the concerns, saying staffers with Samsungs just need to get used to the product.

"The value in kind we get is fully useful, meets our needs and fully offsets the budget we would otherwise have to spend," said Dave Cobb, deputy executive director of the organizing committee.

Still, concerted lobbying at VANOC headquarters has meant a compromise, allowing some staffers to discreetly keep their BlackBerry device, a rare breach of official sponsor protocol.

Samsung will provide 9,200 Omnia and Vice units for VANOC, the International Olympic Committee and assorted VIPs to use during the Games.

THE CANADIAN PRESS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Clean up that Christmas mess

JON TATTRIE
for Metro Canada

Struggling with post-Christmas clutter can suck the holiday cheer out of any home as festive lights yield to January bleakness, so Metro asked professional organizers for tips on reclaiming your space.

Jane Veldhoven, owner of the Halifax-based Get Organized!, says the first step is out with the old to make room for the new.

"I see so many people spending time moving their stuff from one place to another, when in reality there is just way too much stuff and no matter how much organizing you do, it's never going to be under control," she says.

Go online to offload your old TVs and sweaters. Use Facebook, Kijiji, Craigslist and your local freecycling site to find new homes.

"You post something on there you think no one will want and low and behold, there they are," she says. "It amazes me."

Tidying after the holiday may seem daunting, but as author (of The Art of Organizing Everything) and consultant Rosalie Maggio says, "Procrastinating has its place."

If that doesn't work, give you excess baggage to furniture banks and charity stores. Veldhoven connects clients to an artistically inclined church that regularly funnels unwanted item to amateur artisans, who happily recraft them.

Rosalie Maggio, author of The Art of Organizing Anything, says don't fear the clutter. "Here's my theory: If you have clutter in the house, there's probably room for it in the house," she says. "What blows a lot of people is that it's so much to deal with."

So don't deal with it. Take Santa and the lights down, stuff things under the bed and make your house livable. Then forget about it until February.

"Procrastinating has its place," the California-based consultant says.

When you do start, break it down. Line up the rooms and go after them one by one. Channel the clutter as you go by starting a pile at the front door for things leaving the house, one for keys, one for mail and even one for things that have no immediate home. This keeps things moving toward their intended destinations, cutting clutter off at the pass. When you get to re-storing things, use the unused spaces under the bed for clothes or nets hanging from children's bedroom walls for toys or in the garage for sports equipment.

In the end, it only matters if it bothers you and your housemates, Maggio says.

"There are people who are just a mess, and they're fine. It's only other people who say, 'Do you have enemies? Who did this to you?'"

"No matter how much organizing you do, it's never going to be under control."
Jane Veldhoven on the virtues of selling your old stuff

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Some tips for quiet time

HomeScape
Sylvia Putz

metronews.ca/homescape

Barking dogs, crying babies, Internet and tv chatter, and the sound of video games being played over and over again were all part of the holidays for me.

But I'm happy to report that, with the season safely behind us, I'm relishing the relative quiet of my work and home environment.

It also leaves me some time to reflect on how to go about minimizing noise in a household during those times of raucous merrymaking.

I've discovered that our kitchen, now so charmingly open and accessible to all (thanks to long-awaited renovations), is loud during large gatherings. All the lovely new hard surfacing such as tiles and countertops and backsplashes reflect right back at you the loud laughs, clattering dishes, excited dog barks and shrieks from over-stimulated children.

Sensible people might consider rationing the sugar and leaving the dog in a doggie hotel, and I might just consider it next year. Of course, I might have also anticipated noise and built sound attenuation technology into my home, but that didn't happen. So for those of you in a similar situation, let me pass on the results of my reflections on how home decor can easily be used to help minimize noise.

If a home is newly built or renovated or is simply sparsely decorated, sound waves have many smooth, reflective surfaces to bounce from, unobstructed, and noise becomes an issue. Particularly in a large room, such as a family room, you need soft (porous) surfaces to absorb noise rather than reflective hard surfacing.

That doesn't mean every surface has to be covered in fabric. A good rule of thumb is to cover at least 25 per cent of surfaces in a room in fabric or sound-attenuating finishes.

Sylvia Putz is a journalist with an interest in decor and design. She's written for the TV show Arresting Design; sputz@arrestingdesign.com.

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Crawford rejects '80s trend
Cindy Crawford refuses to wear the '80s trend because she was around the first time it was popular. The 43-year-old supermodel — who quit full time modelling in 2000 — doesn't always wear what's in fashion because she now knows what flatters her. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Style

How the West is worn

Thousands of cowboys and cowgirls will be decked out in their Western finery at the National Western Stock Show in Denver this month. So what is today's well-dressed cowboys and cowgirls to wear? A clean hat with a carefully creased crown, maybe in a style called "Cattleman" or "Montana" or "Gus." They might also wear a brightly coloured shirt and heavily starched jeans. Left: A cowgirl-inspired design from Canadian design label Dsquared2. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Canada's Next Top Paper Dolls

Illustrator commemorates designers with fun cutouts

JANINE FALCON
for Metro Canada

DESIGNS In the early days of her enthrallment with fashion, when she was a child, fashion illustrator Danielle Meder checked costume-history books out of the library and used them as reference to make paper dolls and elaborate cut-out paper gowns.

She moved on to other mediums as she grew older, but returned to paper dolls last fall to commemorate Toronto LG Fashion Week's spring/summer 2010 collections.

"Every time fashion week comes around I look for a way to cover it that is different," said the Ryerson fashion grad in an interview with Metro. "The season before, I did watercolour postcards."

In total, Meder's charming project consists of 15 designer collections (including Vawk, Evan Biddell, Jessica Jensen, Pink Tartan and even Sears Attitude), 17 paper dolls and more than 60 items of clothing and accessories. "I did the drawings by hand, inked the outlines, scanned them, and coloured them in Photoshop," explains Meder. Each doll took about three hours to complete.

Paper Dolls is available as a bound book printed on heavy stock for $43 US from blurb.com, as well as in PDF form for $17.95 directly from Meder via finalfashion@ gmail.com. A free mini download is also available on her blog, finalfashion.ca.

Above: Lovas designs. Left: Vawk design. Fashion illustrator Danielle Meder's new Paper Dolls book, depicts spring/summer 2010 collections from Toronto Fashion week. Right: Katrina Tuttle designs.

Mark Fast proves he has fashion principles

PEOPLE Any up-and-coming designer would be giddy at the opportunity to dress Lady Gaga, the fashion world's latest style icon.

But when the pop star's stylist approached Mark Fast to borrow some of his body-hugging knitwear designs, the Canadian-born, London-based designer politely declined.

"I love her music and that Bad Romance song is stuck in my head all the time, but we don't necessarily have to accept everyone just because they are famous," says the soft-spoken designer.

"My work is about a lifestyle. It's not fast-food fashion. It's not about trends, it's about classic, it's about the body, it's about beauty. Maybe that gets lost in the picture with certain celebrities."

Not that the 29-year-old designer has anything against celebrities. Kate Moss, Beyoncé, Kylie Minogue and Rihanna are all fans of his body-sculpting knitwear with the sexy peekaboo weaves that is often referred to as hosiery for the body.

TARA WALTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Mark Fast put size 0 and size 12 models on the same runway for his summer 2010 collection to show his knit dresses suit all sizes.

"He has taken an old craft and made it look modern," says Barbara Atkin, vice-president of fashion direction at Holt Renfrew, where Fast's collection is sold in Canada.

Hanging on a rack, his dresses look like shrunken, wilted plants. But once on the female form, those knits blossom to life.

It is a point he was perhaps trying to make during London fashion week in September at his last show. Fast ignited a flurry of media attention. The designer insisted on using a few plus-sized models in the show — his size 12 models strutted the runway alongside size 0 models — despite objections from his stylist, who quit a few days before.

Since that breakout show, Fast's world is spinning, well, much faster.

He was nominated for a British Fashion Award this month. He is preparing an upcoming collection for London's trendy Topshop. And he just launched an affordable collection called Faster.

And now that he snagged the attention of celebrities and the fashion media, expectations are high to see what magic he will weave for his next show at London fashion week in February.

"Oh, no pressure at all!" he laughs. "I'm just going to lock myself in my studio and not listen to anything and keep it real."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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New clothing line

Grammy award-winning pop band Kings of Leon are coming out with a new line of clothing this month to be sold at select stores in the U.S. and London, England. The 12-piece collection wll be called S2A x KOL. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Fashion flashback '09...

The trends we embraced and the styles we can't wait to see on their way out!

METRO & TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

We were mad for plaid and flannel in '09. Pictured: a creation from Canadian label Dsquared2.

Zebra, leopard and snake patterns inspired an animal print craze in '09.

Ugg boots are still hanging on despite previous predictions they would fade into oblivion. Here's hoping that 2010 is the year that Uggs are undone.

Faux fur will hopefully go the way of the dodo in '10.

Mad Men was a major fashion influence in 2009, with cinched belts and pencil skirts for women and skinny ties and tailored suits for men.

With MJ's planned comeback and passing, his fashion influence made a resurgence, '09 was awash in fedoras (right) and military jackets (above).

Designer Alexander Wang.

Year end ups and downs

Ups:

- Alexander Wang: From his hugely popular new accessories line to his winning the prestigious Swiss Textile Award, Alexander Wang could practically do no wrong in '09.
- Acne: The Swedish brand, led by Jonny Johansson, got major props for evolving into a highly coveted ready-to-wear and accessories line from its denim roots.

Downs:

- Lindsay Lohan: Thanks to the fallout from her collaboration with Emanuel Ungaro (horrendous reviews, internal regime changes), the celeb has become a fashion punchline.
- Maison Martin Margiela: For months, rumors had been circulating that the famously enigmatic designer Maison Martin Margiela had left his namesake. Just weeks ago, the brand finally confirmed what everyone already knew.

KENYA HUNT/ METRO WORLD NEWS

In brief

MEDIA British fashion publication V Magazine is breaking the mould with an upcoming issue devoted entirely to curvier women. Called "The Size Issue," the special edition will include high-fashion shoots of women with fuller thighs, tummies, breasts and even love handles sporting Gucci, Dolce & Gabbana and more. V Magazine's Size Issue hits newsstands Jan. 14. Photographed by Solve Sundsbo, this fashion spread is considered to be the first notable plus-size feature in high fashion.

METRO NEWS SERVICE

Appy New Year!

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Metro

Available on the App Store

Williams stars in Chicago
Former Destiny's Child star Michelle Williams will see her name in lights next month when she high-kicks her way into the starring role of Roxie Hart in Chicago on Broadway. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Entertainment

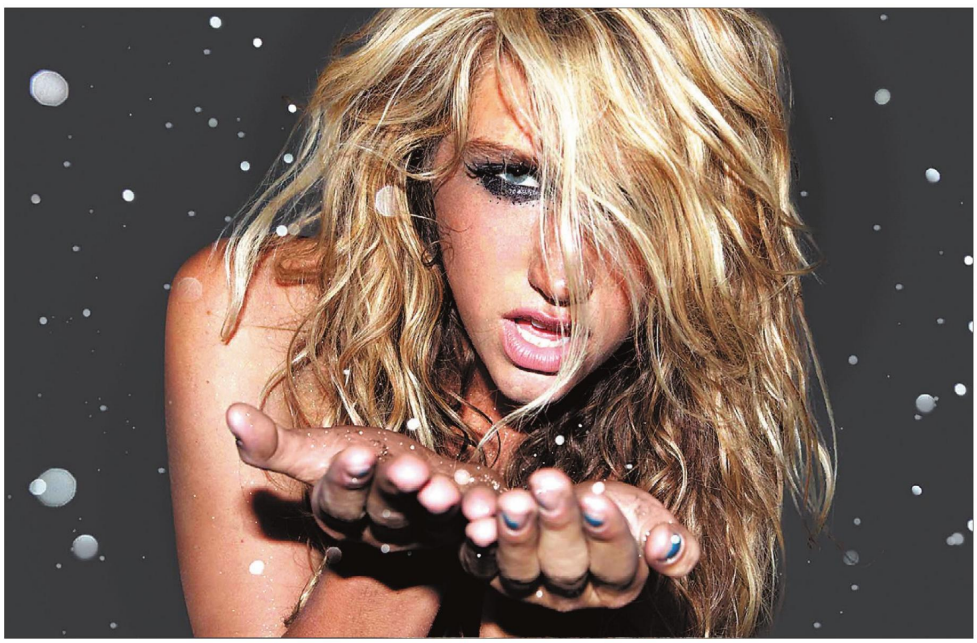
Madge mix
Madonna is set to take a new rap-rock direction. The singer is working with rap producer A-Trak and rock producer Brendan O'Brien in an attempt to merge the genres on her new album. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

Ke$ha unleashes Animal

Debut album from TiK ToK singer includes a host of other irresistible tracks



Ke$ha's debut album Animal features the hit single TiK ToK.

Ke$ha

Album: Animal
Label: RCA/Sony
Rating: ●●●½

THIS ISN'T THE sort of album that critics are supposed to like. It oozes autotune and celebrates a frat-girl culture where the two most important things in life are getting naked and guzzling Jack. Still, these songs are irresistible. As a matter of fact, the first single, TiK ToK, is the first No. 1 hit of the new decade. There's almost a Zappaesque quality to the adolescent hedonism depicted here. How can you not fall in love with a song like Party at a Rich Dude's House. Is there, after all, anything better than drinking other people's Dom Perignon … guilt free? Then there's that voice. It may not possess the power of Streisand, but — unique and readily identifiable — it does have its virtues. And how about those freckles? We're going to be hearing a lot more than just TiK ToK from this.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada

Diana Panton

Album: Pink
Label: Independent
Rating: ●●●●

AT TIMES IT seems like there's an army of women out there with sweet voices recording jazz standards with the backing of well-paid veteran musicians. Every city seems to have a couple and they all pretty much sound alike. So it's truly delightful when one comes along who stands out from the rest, as Diana Panton does. She's a young singer from Hamilton, Ont., who pulled off a Juno nomination last year without any record label support. Pink — Panton's third self-produced CD — is stocked with 15 light-hearted romantic standards like Wouldn't It Be Loverly, Tea for Two, Me Myself and I and What is there to Say. Panton delivers the perfect balance of wit and heartache. She doesn't just sing these classics, she understands them. That's a rare talent and it has drawn three of the best jazz players in the country around her. Guido Basso (horns), Reg Schwager (guitar) and Don Thompson (keyboards) would follow her anywhere.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada

The Parkas

Album: You Should Have Killed Us When You Had the Chance
Label: Saved by Radio
Rating: ●●●●

IF TORONTO GROUP the Parkas broke up after its last lacklustre album, no one would have been upset. Instead the band's four members simultaneously quit and released the best album of their career. On their third record, they finally found themselves. They've made pop and rock records before, but this is the first time they've melded straight-up rock with quirky pop. And the results are admirable. Every track is as catchy as the next and they perfectly balance aggressive sounds with touching pop sensibilities. Hopefully there will be a reunion in the near future.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

By Divine Right

Album: Mutant Message
Label: Hand Drawn Dracula
Rating: ●●●½

BY DIVINE RIGHT is a bit like the Second City of music. Musicians join the band to hone their chops then leave for greener pastures (Brendan Canning, Leslie Feist and Brian Borcherdt to name a few). That leaves José Contreras, the group's founder, to guide the band through different incarnations, sounds and eras. The group, now a trio, deliver a beautiful collection of psychedelic indie rock sounds on its first disc in five years. It's not unlike some past work, but with new bandmates it feels fresh and re-energized. Pisco Sour is an especially fun and bouncy tune.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

Mudvayne

Album: Mudvayne
Label: Epic/Sony
Rating: ●●

SOME ARTISTS ARE too clever by half. Take Mudvayne. The cover art for the metal band's new self-titled CD is a fold-out 12 panel something-or-other that can only be viewed under a black light. Unfortunately the band didn't send a black light with the review copy, so it just sits there … white as a sheet. Mudvayne fans must all have black lights at home, though. You can tell by the groans of disappointment emanating from the chat rooms over the latest bits of melodrama that pass for Mudvayne lyrics. It's pretty much impossible to decipher the words from the hardcore growls contained on the disc, so the fans must have read them off the cover … which, of course, can only be viewed under a black light. Hmmm. Otherwise, there's a lot for metalheads to like and dislike here. The CD combines thrash with near-listenable interludes of melody that at times approach dangerously close to Nickelback. There's even a tasty piece of acoustic guitar work in the intro to Scream With Me. This is a band that has the good sense to keep its vomit-scream vocals at the rear of the mix.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada

Album Reviews
music@metronews.ca

Kenya's Style
Kenya Hunt
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Newest Kardashian model

Move over Kim, Khloe and Kourtney: A new Kardashian will soon be entering the spotlight. Kendall Jenner, 14 — daughter of Kris Kardashian and Bruce Jenner — recently signed on to Wilhelmina Modeling Agency. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Not the original, but not bad

Sherlock Holmes expert likes new film, despite changes

A Canadian Sherlock Holmes expert is giving the new film starring Robert Downey Jr. a thumbs-up, though he says it bears little resemblance to the original stories.

Yes, spotting the differences between Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Holmes tales — published between 1887 and 1927 — and director Guy Ritchie's high-octane new action film, is elementary. "I didn't find much resemblance between the film and the authentic Sherlock Holmes, but I certainly enjoyed the film," said Chris Redmond, a Waterloo, Ont., native who has written three books on Holmes and maintains the website sherlockian.net.

"(It's) very entertaining in a quite different genre from anything that Arthur Conan Doyle ever thought up." Already a hit with movie-goers (the film crossed the $138-million mark in North American grosses over the weekend), Sherlock Holmes ran the risk of offending purist fans by recasting its lead character as a spry, Indiana Jones-esque screen hero who cracks as many skulls as cases.

"The most dramatic difference (between the movie and the stories) is that Holmes is presented essentially as a physical adventurer with battles and chasing rather than as primarily a detective, somebody who reasons out a puzzle, who looks at clues," said Redmond.

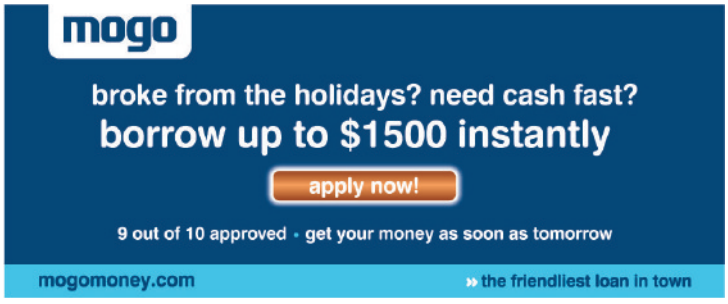
In fact, Redmond, 60, says the film owes less to Basil Rathbone's iconic Holmes movies, released between 1939 and 1946, than it does to the 1985 film Young Sherlock Holmes and the 1979 film Murder by Decree, which starred Canadian Christopher Plummer.

And yet, Redmond says the new Sherlock Holmes film does get a few details right. The scene in which a shirtless, greased-up Downey tosses bone-crunching punches at a brute twice his size might have seemed a bit out of character for the detective.

But Redmond points out that Holmes' boxing experience was referenced numerous times in the original stories — though he also notes that in all 60 of those tales, Holmes was drawn into a fight only once, not "every 15 minutes" as in the film.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Robert Downey Jr., right, stars as Holmes, and Jude Law is his sidekick Dr. Watson. The film has already made $138 million.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Private funeral for Johnson

The body of socialite and Johnson&Johnson heiress Casey Johnson will be flown east for a private funeral, a family spokesman said yesterday.

Johnson, 30, will be laid to rest later this week in a service attended by immediate family, a spokesman said. He declined to provide the location or any additional details.

Johnson was found dead in her Los Angeles home Monday. An autopsy conducted Tuesday was inconclusive and the cause of her death was deferred pending results of toxicology tests, which could take a month or more.

Johnson, dubbed the "baby-oil heiress" by the New York Post, lived her life on the tabloid pages. She announced last month that she was "engaged" to bisexual reality TV star Tila Tequila.THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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	620	523	40 BVO	(6:00) Foolproof ★★ (2003)		Law & Order "Competence"		Without a Trace "Voir Dire"		Red Shoe Diaries ★★ (1992, Drama) (CC)		
	601	562	41 SLC	Re-Vamped (CC)		ET Canada	What	Real Housewives of Jersey		Real Housewives OC		Runway
	520	505	42 DIS	MythBusters YouTube myths.		Daily Planet (CC)		Mega Beasts The Terror Bird.		Mega Beasts		MythBusters
	522	506	44 HIS	Pawn Stars	Pawn Stars	Ancient Discoveries (CC)		Ancestors	Ancestors	Nostradamus Effect (CC)		Blow Down
	627	528	45 SPC	Locusts: The 8th Plague (CC)		Stargate SG-1 (CC)		Star Trek: Next Gener.		Lost "Jughead" (CC)		Locusts
	294	650	47 TBS	Family Guy	Family Guy	Lopez Tonight		Seinfeld	Sex and-City	Sex and-City	Sex and-City	Lopez Tonight
	619	525	48 TROP	Reality	What	Family Guy	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	'70s Show	King	Comeback
	603	561	52 FN	Ace of Cakes "Baked Alaska"		Restaurant Makeover (CC)		Diner, Drive-In	Unwrapped	Extreme Cuisine-Jeff Corwin		Ace of Cakes
	-	-	53 AMC	(5:00) Unforgiven ★★★★		Hombre ★★★ (1967, Western) Paul Newman, Fredric March. (CC)					Lonely Are the Brave ★★★	
	626	547	57 COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	Name Is Earl	The Simpsons	South Park	Martin	Martin	Daily Show
	320	621	60 CEN	(6:15) Growing Op (2008) (CC)		A Crime ★★★ (2006) Harvey Keitel. (CC)				(:45) The Bourne Ultimatum ★★★ (2007) Matt Damon. (CC)		
	581	566	101 MTV	Jersey Shore (N) (CC)		MTV Live	After	The Real World (CC)		Jersey Shore (CC)		MTV Live
	261	394	102 V	(6:00) Love Me Tender ★★		Kid Galahad ★★ (1962) Elvis Presley, Gig Young. (CC)				Samba Squad		Paid Program
	-	-	105 MUL	Sewing Maid	Kingdom-Wind	Vancouver	Shaktimaan	Dheeyan Ghar	Sadabahar	Connections	Desi Rhythms	Patrol World

critics'corner

The Mentalist

Jane and Lisbon (Simon Baker, Robin Tunney) and the rest of the CBI team encounter one of California's most dangerous motorcycle gangs while investigating the death of an attorney who had the bikers as his only client. Molly Price, Jesse James, Julia Campbell, Tom Adams and Mark Pellegrino guest star in "Red Menace." 10:01 PM on CBS CTV

Bones

The remains of an Amish youth are discovered near railroad tracks, and Brennan and Booth (Emily Deschanel, David Boreanaz) discover the youngster was a brilliant pianist. Now they need to determine whether his death might be connected to his gift. Cam (Tamara Taylor) has trouble parenting her stepdaughter, Michelle (Tiffany Hines), and asks Booth for help in "The Plain in the Prodigy." 8 PM on GTV FOX

School wins Justin Bieber

CONCERT A successful canned food drive has won students at a New York middle school a concert by Canadian teen pop sensation Justin Bieber.

The 15-year-old singer will perform at Long Beach Middle School in Lido Beach sometime in February. The school bested 149 other area schools by collecting more than 27,000 pounds of food.

Stars will be out at Golden Globes

AWARDS Christina Aguilera, Tom Hanks and Neil Patrick Harris will appear at the Golden Globe Awards. The Hollywood Foreign Press Association says the three stars will be presenters at the 67th annual ceremony. Ricky Gervais is set to host the awards, which will be held Jan. 17. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Top food trends announced
According to the foodchannel.com, sushi, gourmet burgers, pomegranates, bacon and cupcakes were some of the biggest food trends of the past decade, while wasabi and ginger were some of the top flavours. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Urban Foodie

10 best restaurants of '09

ANYA LEVYKH
anya.levykh@gmail.com

A down economy, scared-cheap clientele, and the looming threat of the HST. The restaurant industry has had better years than 2009. And although the number of restaurant openings last year can't rank next to the full-bodied vintage of 2007 (when over 200 new dining spots appeared within a single year), there were enough new stars on the horizon to keep our hopes moderately high and our palates very happy. Here are my picks for the top 10 new restaurants of 2009.

10. SOCIETY No need to wait for the fair this summer. Glowbal Restaurant Group has created a sleek, chic funhouse, where drinks like the Candy Collins ($7) utilize the in-house cotton candy machine, and the ubiquitous bread basket has been replaced by gargantuan Kobe beef meatballs wrapped in bacon and slathered in tomato fondue. The chandeliers are worth a visit all by themselves, but you'll return for dishes like mac-and-cheese balls ($8) and the shake-n-bake chicken ($17).
1257 Hamilton St.
604-629-8800
society-grg.ca

9. HABIT Phoenix rising might be a good descriptor for this restaurant. After a catastrophic fire in December of 2008, Habit literally rose from the ashes last fall with a new look, a new menu, and a loyal new following.
The dark, sexy room is perfectly in keeping with its South Main environs, and the menu is so casual that you even make your own martinis (ingredients are served bento-box style). Brie-and-carrot perogies ($11) and salt cod cakes with wild rice-sunchoke pancakes ($12) are just a couple of reasons to drop by.
2610 Main St.
604-877-8582
habitlounge.ca

8. NOOK This little hole-in-the-wall on the edge of Denman says "comfort" from the minute you step onto the tiled floor and take in the warm red of the banquets and bar chairs.
The Italian trattoria menu is equally cozy, and is perfectly matched by the almost-exclusively-Italian wine list that offers practically everything by the glass, and all bottles under $75. The ricotta pizza ($14) with roasted tomatoes, olives and onions is a treat, as is the chicken liver crostini ($6) with capers and deep-fried onion threads.
781 Denman St.
604-568-4554
nookrestaurant.ca

7. L'ALTRO BUCA Chef Andrey Durbach has long been known to Vancouver diners for his food at Pied-à-Terre, La Buca and Parkside.
When the latter experienced the first shocks of the recession, Durbach and partner Chris Stewart shut it down and "rebooted" as L'Altro Buca, with La Buca's menu, but a whole new vibe — not to mention lower price points.
Green pea and mint agnolotti with braised lamb cheeks ($19.5) is a customer favourite, as is the housemade duck prosciutto with sliced scallops ($12.50).
1906 Haro St
604-683-6912
altrobuca.ca

JACKIE CONNELLY/FOR METRO VANCOUVER
Co-owner/bartender Brian Grant of The Pourhouse, this year's top 10 winner.

6. MARKET BY GORGES It's a sign of the times that a superstar chef like Jean-Georges Vongerichten decided to open a restaurant here rather than in Toronto.
Market, at the swank Shangri-La Hotel, is a drop-dead, knock-you-off-your-feet, shimmery-gold bombshell of a room, yet the price point is better than some places with more pretension and less substance.
The menu is highly local and über-inventive and the wine list is surprisingly accessible for such a high-end joint. Soy-glazed short ribs with apple-jalapeno puree ($24) and the black truffle pizza with fontina cheese ($15) are must-tries.
1128 West Georgia St
604-695-1115
shangri-la.com

5. REFUEL Another example of a restaurant "reboot," Refuel is the new, lower-priced incarnation of chef Robert Belcham's and sommelier Tom Doughty's fine-dining Fuel.
(This one is so new, in fact, that you'll be reading my review next week.)
The new Pacific Northwest menu doesn't sacrifice on quality or provenance, despite the lower price points, and the ingredients continue to be sourced from local suppliers.
Buttermilk-fried Polderside chicken ($18) and dry-aged Pemberton Meadows beef burger ($14.50) are just a couple stand-outs.

On the web

- Read the full article online at metronews.ca/vancouver/columnist/40411.
- Chew more on Anya's blog at metronews.ca/vancouver/blog/136310.

1944 West 4 Ave
604-288-7905
refuelrestaurant.com

4. AU PETIT CHAVIGNOL Charcuterie has experienced quite the renaissance over the past couple of years, but it was this "little goat" that elevated the craft into edible art.
The small, poured-concrete room is surprisingly inviting and warm, as is the stand-out wine list, with its endless by-the-glass and cheese-friendly selections.
It's not just the duck rillettes ($12) that make the buds water, however, as the kitchen is fully operational and turns out wonders like the croque madame ($11) and the gruyere-and parmesan-crusted mac 'n' cheese ($9).
843 East Hastings St
604-255-4218
aupetitchavignol.com

3. MAENAM The final (and best) reboot on this list, Maenam is the second child of chef Angus An, born in the former Gastropod space. Instead of the former molecular gastronomy-influenced menu, Maenam burst forth with fresh Thai flavours and excellent price points in a room made for loud laughter and happy eating.
The housemade naam ($8) — fried, fermented Thai sausages with garlic and chili threads — are a carnivorous wonder, as is the Muslim oxtail soup ($14 for two) with orange zest and Vietnamese mint.
1938 West 4 Ave
604-730-5579
maenam.ca

2. MIS TRUCOS Despite the name, there are no tricks on chef/owner Kris Barnholden's menu, just good Mediterranean-based eats served tapas-style. The room speaks of warmer climes as well, with its bright windows, white palette, and light wood tabletops. All wines are available by the glass, and $8 cocktails like the cohombro o pepino or sangria go down much too easily. Don't miss the piperade of Serrano ham with slow-cooked egg ($7) or the white truffle and lobster risotto ($14).
1141 Davie St
604-566-3960
mistrucos.ca

1. THE POURHOUSE What do you get when you mix two bartenders (Jay Jones, Brian Grant) with a chef (Chris Irving)? A winning combination, that's what. Gastown's newest dining spot features a retro, 1930s feel. Is it coincidence that was the era of the Great Depression? Maybe not. A solid drinks program that leans on bourbon and gin is bolstered by the kind of down-home food we haven't seen since our childhood — think campfire trout ($18) and tomato soup with grilled cheese ($10).
The room marries old-world class (white linen tablecloths, heavy silver cutlery) with new world comfort (check out the big-ass bar front and centre), and I have seen dockworkers as comfortable here as Yaletown swanksters. I've gone back several times for the neon squid ($12), large, tender, juicy steaks topped with garlic, chili threads and fresh green onion. That and the cold rice pudding with caramelized figs make for one outstanding house where the food is anything but "poor."
162 Water St
604-568-7022
pourhousevancouver.com

Global Peasant blog online

- Travel along with Diane Thompson's culinary adventures in her Global Peasant blog.
- Check out metronews.ca/globalpeasant for a recipe of oven roasted radishes.

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metro
metronews.ca

Williams wants wedding bells

Robbie Williams plans to get married on Valentine's Day, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The singer got engaged last week but is desperate to make Ayda Field — who he has been dating for around three years — his wife. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Miley Cyrus comes clean on recent tattoo's meaning

KEEPING ABREAST OF IT Miley Cyrus is speaking out for the first time about the phrase she recently had tattooed under her breast, "just breathe."

The 17-year-old says she got the body art as a tribute to friends and family who have passed away.

"It really doesn't hurt if you're thinking about the meaning. I could never get a meaningless tattoo, but I think that if you're doing something that's significant in your life, it takes some of the pain away," she tells Harper's Bazaar.

"It reminds me not to take things for granted. I mean breathing — that was something none of them could do, the most basic thing. And I put it near my heart, because that is where they will always be."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Stallone fractured neck in fight with Stone Cold

SLAP ON THE STUNNER Sylvester Stallone got a little to into his work while filming The Expendables, with one fight scene sending him to the hospital with a broken neck.

"My fight with Stone Cold Steve Austin was so vicious that I ended up getting a hairline fracture in my neck. I'm not joking," Stallone tells FHM magazine. "I haven't told anyone this, but I had to have a very serious operation afterwards. I now have a metal plate in my neck."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Russell Brand, Katy Perry engaged

MORE WEDDING BLISS Word is circulating that comedian Russell Brand and singer Katy Perry reportedly are engaged, with us-magazine.com reporting Brand has confirmed the impending nuptials.

Brand, 34, is quoted in Wednesday's editions of the Britain Sun as texting, "It's true. Much love."

Adding fuel to the flame, Perry, 25, Tweeted around 1 a.m. New York time from Thailand on Wednesday an oblique reference to an Alanis Morrisette song: "So when do I start walking the streets naked singing that Alanis song?"

Morrisette's lines in Thank You include: "How about me just enjoying the moment for once" and "Thank you India" (where the couple vacationed recently).

The couple, who've been dating since this autumn, have been nearly inseparable since hooking up.

But that there were rumours of nuptials isn't surprising: Brand hinted earlier this month that he foresaw having kids with the singer, famous for her over-the-top fruit-themed props.

On the domestic front, Perry has already introduced the comedian to her religious parents, and once showed off a pair of undies embroidered with the colors of his favorite soccer team, West Ham United.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Swift has body image issues

AS DO MANY STARLETS AND THE YOUNG GIRLS WHO IDOLIZE THEM... MAKES YOU THINK, DOESN'T IT? Taylor Swift doesn't like her body, femalefirst.co.uk reports. Despite her glittering film and music career, the 20-year-old starlet isn't confident with her appearance and is inundated with insecurities about her face and body.

She said: "I definitely have body issues, but everybody does. When you come to the realization that everybody does that — even the people that I consider flawless — then you can start to live with the way you are.

"I've read interviews with some of the most beautiful women who have insecurities. And you look at them and you're like 'How do you have?' Name one thing wrong with yourself and they could name a handful."

However, Taylor has vowed to beat her insecurities and learn to love her body.

She said: "I don't really want to be that way. I'd like to try to maintain confidence and stay okay with who I am because I don't really want to change it. Everybody has insecurities — everybody — but hopefully you can overcome them."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Claimant seeks Jacko cash

IT JUST DOESN'T STOP One of the many claims filed against Michael Jackson's estate turns out to be from a woman who claims she was briefly married to the eccentric pop star in the 1970s.

Shellie Doreen Smith says she doesn't remember the exact details of their brief marriage, but the private ceremony took place at a New York hotel, and the only witnesses were hotel employees, according to TMZ.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity tweets

Eddie Izzard is looking out for the foxes, Taylor Swift is full of concern at all hours, and Tila Tequila starts a feud with Perez Hilton.

- @eddieizzard In the UK, the Tory party will bring back fox hunting if they can win an election. They haven't changed from last time.
- @OfficialTila @PerezHilton haha already showing your true colors like a fat little kid who lost another candy bar.
- @taylorswift13 Sorry to @grantmickelson for, after having a dream where you were bitten by a shark, calling at 4am to make you swear to stay on land.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

The Weather Network TWIN incorporates MSC data
Today Variable 5°/3° | Friday Rain 80% 7°/6° | Saturday Rain 80% 8°/6°
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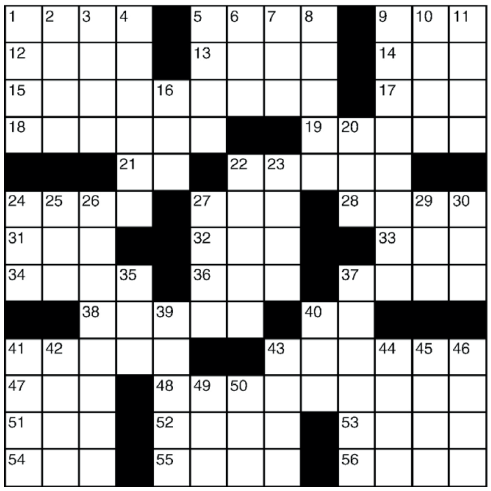
Take Five



1 Not barefoot
5 Let off some steam
9 Debtor's letters
12 Art-class model, often
13 Early pulpit
14 Springtime mo.
15 Classic sitcom
17 Face
18 End of a sentence?
19 Obliterate
21 With 40-Across, in which case
22 Milk dispenser?
24 Eager
27 "CSI" evidence
28 Nitwit
31 Bing's pal
32 Sternward
33 Army rank (Abbr.)
34 Skelton's Kadiddlehopper
36 Conk out
37 Read cursorily
38 Minimum
40 See 21-Across
41 Pandora set them free
43 Provoke
47 Last letter
48 Theme song of vaudeville's Eva Tanguay
51 Gun the engine
52 Catastrophic
53 Differently
54 Mimic
55 Foil's cousin
56 Harvest

DOWN

1 Quick cut
2 Island dance
3 Stench
4 Lacking, with "of"
5 Low land
6 Ostrich's cousin
7 Leno's network
8 Monkeyed (with)
9 Simon and Garfunkel song
10 Piece of work
11 Egg on
16 Sprite
20 Scarlet
22 Ill-suited
23 Social engagement
24 Easy as —
25 Abbr. on a book's spine
26 Inspirational song of 1953
27 June honorees
29 Luau bowlful
30 Shade source
35 Gibson or Brooks
37 Association football
39 Remark to the audience
40 Perch
41 Pound of poetry
42 Second in command, maybe
43 Dandling locale
44 Hardy cabbage
45 — Minor
46 Chick's comment
49 Pickpocket
50 Galena or cinnabar

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

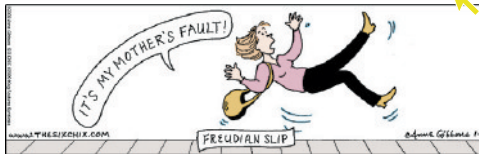
3		9				4		8
1		8		6		2		5
			8		4			
		4	9		5	1		
		2	7		1	8		
			6		9			
7		5		1		9		3
9		1				6		7

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

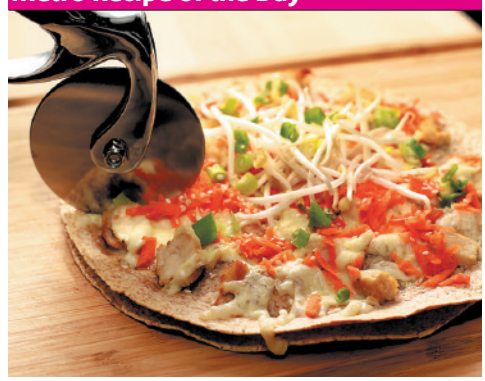
4	6	7	2	5	8	3	1	9
8	5	1	4	3	9	2	7	6
3	2	9	6	1	7	4	8	5
5	1	4	7	8	6	9	2	3
7	9	3	5	2	4	8	6	1
6	8	2	1	9	3	7	5	4
9	7	6	8	4	5	1	3	2
1	4	5	3	7	2	6	9	8
2	3	8	9	6	1	5	4	7

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca



Metro Recipe of the Day



Quick Thai Chicken Pizza

Submitted by: Darlene Chapman Dawson Creek, B.C.

INGREDIENTS:

1 boneless skinless chicken breast
1 Cup skim milk mozzarella cheese
1 Cup shredded carrot (packaged ok)
1 Cup bean sprouts
4 whole wheat large tortillas
2 Tablespoon olive oil
2 Teaspoon sesame oil
2 Tablespoon tahini paste (look for this in the peanut butter section of the supermarket)
2 green onion
2 Teaspoon sesame seeds

METHOD:

1. Heat oven to 375°F.
2. In microwave oven container cover chicken breast with 1 tsp sesame oil, cook according to microwave directions.
3. Remove and let sit while preparing crust.
4. On large cookie sheet, sprinkle 1/4 cup cheese over 2 tortillas, top with additional 2 tortillas. Cook in oven for 5 minutes.
5. Remove from oven when cheese has melted, spread each tortilla with 1 tbsp of olive oil and 1 tbsp of tahini paste.
6. Dice chicken and divide on two tortilla pizzas.
7. Divide remaining cheese, pop back in oven for approx 7-10 minutes until melted.
8. Sprinkle shredded carrots and sprouts on top of pizza.
9. Top with chopped green onions and sprinkle 1 tsp sesame oil and 1 tsp of sesame seeds on top of each pizza.

SERVES 2
PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOK TIME: 15 MINUTES

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Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
You will be tempted to do something outrageous today, just to spice things up a bit. You must not go too far over the top. You'll regret it if you do.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
You will have at least one and maybe several opportunities to move up in the world over the next few days, but will you take advantage of them?

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
You can sense that something good is going to happen but because you are so impatient you may try to hurry things along, and that could be a mistake.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
Something will happen so suddenly today that you may be shocked by how quickly a situation you thought you had under control deteriorates.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
You may be tempted to take some kind of risk today, the kind of risk that has paid off for you many times in the past. It might swamp you.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Someone will play on your emotions today, most likely just for the fun of it. They can only hurt you if you take what they say seriously.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Two groups of friends – one to do with your work and one to do with your family – are unlikely to mix well today, so keep them apart if you can.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
Watch what you say and how you say it over the next 24 hours, because your words may be interpreted as being overly aggressive or antagonistic.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
In all areas, but especially when dealing with people you don't know too well, avoid excessive behavior. Tone down your act a bit.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
The urge to do something drastic, especially in regards to your money situation, must be controlled.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
A setback of some kind will throw your day into confusion and there is really not a lot you'll be able to do about it. You'll survive it.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Your wellbeing is very much on your mind at the moment and you may be thinking of starting a new health or fitness regime. That's good, but don't go crazy.

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NOW AT YOUR BC CHEVROLET DEALERS. bcchevroletdealers.ca 1-800-GM-DRIVE. Chevrolet is a brand of General Motors of Canada. ™The Official Vehicle Partner of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. TM© 2007, VANOC. Used under License. †Purchase financing available on select 2009 models on approved GMAC credit only. Down payment and/or trade may be required. Monthly payment and cost of borrowing will vary depending on amount borrowed and down payment/trade. Example: $10,000 at 0% for 60 months with $0 down, the monthly payment is $166.67. Cost of borrowing is $0, total obligation is $0. Offers with 0% financing are unconditionally interest free. Freight included. License, insurance, registration, PPSA, administration fees and taxes not included. Offers apply to the purchase of 2009/2010 new or demonstrator models, dealer order or trade may be necessary, and applies only to qualified retail customers in BC/Yukon. Dealers are free to set individual prices. Limited time offer which may not be combined with other offers. See your participating GM dealers for conditions and details. ◊Warranty based on 5 years or 160,000 km, whichever comes first. Excludes medium duty trucks. See Dealer for conditions and details. **Return between 30-60 days with less than 4,000Km. Program applies to 2009 and 2010 models only, excludes demos, fleet, lease vehicles and medium duty trucks. Maximum damage allowed of $200. Vehicle usage fee and other restrictions apply. Not available with some other offers. Customer must take retail delivery by January 11 2010. See Dealer or gmt.ca for additional details. ▲2009 ratings based on Natural Resources Canada's 2009 Fuel Consumption Guide ratings. Your actual fuel consumption may vary. ◀$1,000 holiday bonus cash is a manufacturer to Dealer delivery credit (tax exclusive) and is reflected in offers in this advertisement. Offer available on all 2009/2010 Chevrolet models excluding all Saturn and Saab models. Camaro, Express/Savana, Corvette ZR1 and Medium Duty Trucks. △U.S. Government star ratings are part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) New Car Assessment Program (NCAP). The 2009 Chevrolet Aveo and Cobalt received a 5-Star rating for the driver and front passenger in the frontal crash test. For more information on safety ratings, go to www.safercar.gov. ◆Applies to 2009 Cobalt XFE (1AJ7769). Based on Natural Resources Canada's 2009 Fuel Consumption Guide ratings and GM vehicle segmentation for the Compact Car - Regular segment.